



# *Alexandria Police Department*

## **Directive 5.1**



### **PROBATIONARY OFFICER TRAINING**

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### **CONTENTS**

- 5.1.01 PURPOSE AND POLICY
- 5.1.02 RESPONSIBILITIES
- 5.1.03 SELECTION OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS
- 5.1.04 ASSIGNMENTS AND TRAINING
- 5.1.05 EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION
- 5.1.06 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **5.1.01 PURPOSE AND POLICY**

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the Probationary Officer Field Training and Evaluation Program (hereinafter referred to as "the program"). The overall goal of the program is to improve the effectiveness of the city's law enforcement service delivery by:

- Improving the police officer applicant screening process.
- Establishing a probationary police officer appraisal system.
- Establishing a program review procedure.
- Improving the probationary officer training process.
- Preparing probationary officers to perform the essential duties of a police officer.

It is the policy of this department that the program is an extension of the police probationary officer selection process. The program combines field training with behavior-specific evaluations to ensure that the standards of a competent law enforcement officer are met.

#### **5.1.02 RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. The Field Training Commander:

1. Is the *Commander of the Patrol Support Division* unless otherwise designated by the Deputy Chief of the Patrol Operations Bureau (POB) or the Chief of Police;
2. Is responsible for the general control and evaluation of the program and will monitor the progress of all probationary patrol officers for the duration of their probationary employment period;
3. Will coordinate the preparation of statements of probationary officers' development and submit them to the Chief of Police with recommendations to retain, recycle (extend training), or dismiss probationary officers. The Field Training Supervisor, other field training personnel and patrol supervisors will provide input in these evaluations; and
4. Should attend field training meetings to provide and receive first-hand information concerning probationary officer performance and to evaluate the instructional techniques of the Field Training Officers (FTOs).

B. The Field Training Supervisor:

1. Is designated by the Deputy Chief of POB or the Chief of Police;
2. Will assist the Field Training Commander with the general administration of the program;
3. Will monitor and evaluate the development of probationary officers during their probationary period, for the purposes of identifying any deficiencies and resolving them through training or retraining;
4. In concert with the Field Training Commander, will plan, direct and evaluate field training assignments, changes in such assignments, and variations in the length of the assignments;
5. Will work closely with supervisors of probationary officers to determine and correct any training deficiencies. The Field Training Supervisor may recommend recycling probationary officers for retraining;
6. Will ensure that the training and evaluation process is properly administered. Various sources of information should be used to achieve this goal, including but not limited to Daily Observation Reports (DORs) (APD-0401), oral communications with FTOs, tests, and personal observations of probationary officer performance;
7. Will assist in the collection of information relating to a probationary officer's progress and will disseminate it to the appropriate commanders;
8. Will prepare a statement regarding each probationary officer's development and submit it to the Field Training Commander with a recommendation to retain, recycle or dismiss the officer. All involved supervisors and field training personnel will be offered the opportunity to provide input in this final probationary evaluation;
9. Will schedule training sessions and field training meetings as needed to provide and receive information concerning probationary officers' performance and to observe performance problem-solving techniques of the FTOs;

10. Will oversee the selection and training of FTOs;
11. Will complete the probationary officer's six-month evaluation as required by City Administrative Regulations.

12. *Will maintain all scanned copies of the probationary officer's paperwork.*

- C. Patrol Sector Commanders will ensure that supervisors of FTOs, the FTOs, and the probationary officers under their command fulfill their obligations as outlined in this directive.

D. Supervisors of FTOs: **[33.4.3.c]**

1. Have the dual responsibilities of patrol supervisors and also supervisors of the training and evaluation of probationary officers assigned to their group;
2. Will keep the Field Training Supervisor informed of the progress of probationary officers assigned to their group;
3. Will attend training sessions and field training meetings as directed by their commanders; and
4. Will ensure completion of monthly evaluation reports during Phase Three of training (also referred to as Step Five), and the end-of-probation evaluation.

E. Field Training Officers (FTOs): **[33.4.3.e]**

1. Are sworn police officers that meet all qualifications of the program and have successfully completed the FTO selection process;
2. Will receive formal FTO training and *any applicable in-service training* consistent with this program;
3. Have two primary and simultaneous roles to fulfill: patrol officer responsibilities and the training and evaluation of probationary officers assigned to them;
4. Are responsible for the completion of DORs using the ADORE Browser-Based Software program *within 48 hours of the work day*;
5. Will attend meetings scheduled by the Field Training Supervisor;
6. May assist in the background investigation and selection process for police officer candidates, under the supervision of the Personnel and Training commander. The Field Training Supervisor will assist the field training commander in selecting, supervising, and scheduling FTOs for this task, as appropriate; and
7. Will review reports written by probationary officers to identify deficiencies, especially spelling, grammar, neatness, attention to detail, and general organization of thought prior to submission. *Scanned* copies of all paperwork such as reports, parking tickets, vehicle check notices, field interview cards, etc., will also be submitted to the Field Training Supervisor.

F. Probationary Officers:

1. Are responsible to fully apply themselves in the field training process;

2. Are under the direct authority and supervision of their FTOs and will follow their directions;
3. Will sign all evaluations, not indicating agreement or disagreement with the evaluations, but signifying only that the evaluations have been reviewed with them;
4. Will complete the FTO evaluation and the recruit self-evaluation at the completion of each step; and
5. Will read *and sign all documentation in the ADORE software program outlining each step requirement at* the end of Phase Two, Step 3 of their training program.

**5.1.03 SELECTION OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS****[33.4.3.b]**

- A. Notice of FTO openings will be posted.
- B. Applicants will submit a transfer request to Personnel and Training.
- C. Minimum qualifications for FTO applicants are:
  1. A minimum of three years of sworn law enforcement experience, *two years* of which has been served with the Alexandria Police Department. The officer must have also completed their initial probationary period as a Police Officer at this department.
  2. Applicants must be rated at meets requirements or higher in all categories of their most recent *two* annual performance evaluations. The Field Training Supervisor will confirm this before the selection process begins. At the discretion of the field training commander and with the approval of the Chief of Police, other unsatisfactory performance issues that may preclude appointment at that time will be examined to determine an applicant's suitability to participate in the selection process.
- D. FTO candidates will be required to undergo a psychological examination. Applicants' personnel files and Internal Investigations files may also be reviewed.
- E. Qualified applicants will be assessed through a formal selection process. To continue in the selection process, candidates must attain a passing score in this assessment.
- F. Final FTO selection will be made by the Deputy Chief of POB or the Chief of Police upon recommendation by the Field Training Supervisor and Commander.
- G. FTOs may be released from field training and evaluation duties by any of the following means:
  1. At the request of the FTO;
  2. When transferred from patrol duties; and/or
  3. At the direction of the Deputy Chief of POB or the Chief of Police, upon the recommendation of the Field Training Supervisor and Commander.

#### 5.1.04 ASSIGNMENTS AND TRAINING

##### A. Assignments

1. Probationary officers are assigned to Patrol Sectors unless otherwise directed by the Deputy Chief of POB or the Chief of Police.
2. Probationary officers who are assigned to the Patrol Sectors will be under the supervision of their patrol sergeant and Patrol Sector Commanders, as well as the Field Training Supervisor and an FTO.
  - a. The field training assignment is structured and will vary only when a probationary officer needs retraining, or as determined by the Field Training Supervisor and Commander.
  - b. The Field Training Commander may continue the training of a probationary officer beyond the structured time, if further training is needed, or reduce the training time if objectives are met early.
3. Probationary officers assigned to organizational units other than patrol will not be assigned to FTOs.
4. Experienced officers who have been absent from patrol for a period of more than 180 days will be assigned to an FTO to familiarize them with current patrol procedures. *The FTO assignment will be made with input from the Supervisor and Field Training Supervisor. Prior to the officer being released for solo patrol, the FTO must complete a memorandum stating that the officer has demonstrated the required skills as outlined in the FTO task list. This memorandum will be forwarded to the Sector Commander through the Field Training Supervisor.*

##### B. Phases and Steps of Field Training

**[33.4.4.a]**

1. Phase 1 is a minimum of thirty-two (32) hours of in-house orientation, training, proficiency testing and evaluation.
2. Phase 2 consists of Steps 1-4.
  - a. Step 1
    - Is designed as a four week period. For the purposes of this directive, a training week is a workweek during which the probationary officer is assigned to an FTO and has missed no more than one day.
    - During the first day the probationary officer works with the FTO but is not formally evaluated using DORs. This is referred to as the "limbo day."
    - The remaining time in this step consists of structured training and evaluation.
    - The Step 1 FTO is the probationary officer's Primary FTO.
  - b. Step 2
    - Designed as a four-week continuation of the training and evaluation period.
    - The probationary officer should be transferred to a different FTO. **[33.4.3,f]**

c. Step 3

- Designed as a four-week continuation of the training and evaluation period.
- The probationary officer should be transferred to a different FTO. **[33.4.3,f]**

d. Step 4

- Designed as a two-week "Shadow Phase" with the Primary FTO.
- FTOs wear plain clothes and probationary officers wear the uniform.
- Recruit officers must be certified for a solo patrol assignment during this step.

3. Phase Three (also referred to as "Step 5")

- a. The solo assignment of probationary officers for the remainder of the probationary period (6 months long).
  - b. *All* time in Phase Three must be a patrol assignment.
  - c. Supervisors complete Monthly Evaluation Reports and submit them to the Field Training Supervisor.
  - d. Probationary officers may periodically be assigned to FTOs for the purpose of performance review. *Supervisors will coordinate this with the Field Training Supervisor.*
- C. The Field Training Supervisor will determine if any work weeks during which the probationary officer is absent or is un-rated by an FTO for more than one day need to be rescheduled and completed.
- D. The probationary officer's Field Training and Evaluation period may be extended (recycled) or reduced at any point in the process upon the recommendation of the Field Training Supervisor and approval of the Field Training Commander. **[33.1.5]**

**5.1.05 EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION****[33.4.3,g&h]**

- A. Only FTOs and supervisors who have received the necessary training may complete daily and monthly probationary officer evaluation reports.
- B. A DOR will be completed by the FTO each day, starting with the second day of Step 1. FTOs will also complete an overtime slip for no more than one (1) hour for each day that a DOR was completed. *FTO will submit their overtime slips to the Field Training Supervisor before the end of the pay period. FTOs will also scan copies of all paperwork completed by the probationary officer to the Field Training Supervisor within 48 hours of completion.*
- C. End of Step Report
1. Will be completed by the FTO after each step, *using the ADORE software program*; and

2. Will detail the probationary officer's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their status as it relates to whether they will advance to the next step or be recommended that the current step be extended.

D. Probationary Officer Self-Evaluations

1. Will be completed after each step, and periodically during Phase Three.
2. Will detail probationary officers' estimates of their performance strengths and weaknesses.

E. Evaluation of the FTO and FTO Program

1. Will be completed by probationary officers at the end of each step.
2. The Field Training Supervisor and Commander will review these at periodic intervals.

F. Monthly Evaluation Reports

1. Supervisors of FTOs will complete Monthly Evaluation Reports with assistance from other commanders and supervisors and the Field Training Supervisor.
2. The Field Training Supervisor will review the Monthly Evaluation Reports, which will also be available to FTOs and supervisors for review and discussion.
3. The Monthly Evaluation Reports will be *kept in the ADORE software program* after probationary officers review and sign them.

G. Field Training and Evaluation Program reports:

1. Will be kept in the officer's department training file.
2. Are confidential and may be reviewed only by persons with a need to know as determined by the Personnel and Training Commander.

<b>5.1.06 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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- A. Termination may be recommended at any time during the probationary period when a probationary officer cannot or will not perform at a satisfactory level. Such recommendation will be forwarded by the FTO through the Field Training Supervisor to the *Field Training Commander*.
- B. The *Field Training Commander* will ensure sufficient supporting documentation is provided and if so, will prepare a detailed report including his or her recommendation and forward it through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.
- C. The Chief of Police will make the decision on any termination.
  1. If a probationary officer requests it, the Chief of Police will preside over an employment status review. The Field Training Commander and Supervisor will present the reasons for the termination recommendation and the probationary officer will be given an opportunity to respond.
  2. If the Chief of Police concurs with the recommendation, the probationary officer will be relieved of duty by the Field Training Commander or designee.

**By Authority Of:**

**Earl L. Cook  
Chief of Police**